

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated January 23, 2009. Claims 1 to 3, 5 to 9, 17 and 21 to 36 are pending in the application, with Claims 4, 10 to 16 and 18 to 20 having been canceled and Claims 25 to 36 having been newly-added. Claims 1, 5, 8 and 21 to 23 are independent.

Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The title of the invention was objected to. A new title has been provided for as recited above. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 4, 10 to 12 and 13 to 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. The rejections are traversed. In this regard, the Office Action asserts that the claims are directed to a method that can be implemented in software. This assertion is disputed since software alone simply cannot perform the claimed method without being executed by computer hardware. Therefore, the method, if implemented by software, would necessarily also entail the use of computer hardware. Software alone simply cannot do anything without the requisite hardware and therefore, the claims are statutory process claims.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 10, that claim has been cancelled.

As for the rejection of Claims 13 to 15, the Office Action asserts that a computer-readable recording medium can be interpreted as a signal or wave because there is no evidence against it in the specification. Applicant wishes to remind the Examiner that the purpose of the specification is to define the invention of what it “is”, not what it “is not”. In other words, the specification defines various embodiments of the invention, but

does not define various embodiments that are “not” the invention. The Office Action is apparently requiring the latter, which simply is not part of, nor has it ever been a part of, the requirements for compliance with any of §§ 101 or 112. Therefore, the rejections are traversed.

Moreover, the specification does define what the computer-readable medium “is” interpreted to encompass (see e.g., page 26, lines 11 to 14: “*As the recording medium for supplying the program code, for example, a floppy® disk, hard disk, optical disk, magneto-optical disk, CD-ROM, CD-R, magnetic tape, nonvolatile memory card, ROM, and the like may be used.*”) Each of these are statutory tangible mediums as, apparently, recognized by the Examiner. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,782,495 (Bernklau-Halvor). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The invention generally relates to a service request apparatus (e.g., a client) requesting a service from a service providing apparatus. In the invention, the client acquires device information of a device (e.g., a printer) connected to the client, and appends the device information to an address (e.g., a URL) for accessing an agent apparatus. When the agent receives the URL with the device information, it extracts first information (e.g., printer retailer information and the language of a printer driver) and uses that information to determine a service providing apparatus. The agent then uses the address (URL) of the determined service providing apparatus and appends the device

information thereto and returns the address to the client. A web browser in the client receives the address of the service providing apparatus from the agent and the URL in the web browser is automatically changed to the second address (i.e., the client is redirected to the service providing apparatus). The redirect results in the device information being provided to the service providing apparatus, whereby page information (e.g., a page displaying a remaining amount of ink and a purchase number) is generated and returned to the client. The client displays the received page information. As a result, the client accesses the agent, who determines the appropriate service provider, and redirects the client to the proper service provider to provide the requested service.

Referring specifically to the claims, Claim 24 is directed to a system for providing a service via a network, comprising a service request apparatus, a service providing apparatus, and an agent apparatus, the service request apparatus comprising an acquisition unit adapted to acquire device information associated with the device, a transmission unit adapted to transmit the device information to the agent apparatus, wherein the device information is added to a first address for accessing the agent apparatus, a reception unit adapted to receive a second address for accessing a service providing apparatus, which is designated by the agent apparatus based on first information of the device information, wherein the device information is also added to the second address, a sending unit adapted to send the device information added to the second address to the service providing apparatus by accessing the received second address, wherein an address in a web browser of the service request apparatus is automatically changed to the second address, a receiving unit adapted to receive page information from the service providing

apparatus, and a display unit adapted to display the received page information, the agent apparatus comprising a reception unit adapted to receive the device information associated with the device from the service request apparatus, a designation unit adapted to designate the service providing apparatus to be accessed by the service request apparatus based on the first information of the device information, and a transmission unit adapted to transmit the second address for accessing the designated service providing apparatus to the service request apparatus, wherein the device information is also added to the second address, and the service providing apparatus comprising a reception unit adapted to receive the device information associated with the device from the service request apparatus, a generation unit adapted to generate the page information according to the second information of the device information, and a transmission unit adapted to transmit the generated page information to the service request apparatus.

Claim 21 is directed to the request apparatus, Claim 22 is directed to the service providing apparatus, and Claim 23 is directed to the agent apparatus, while Claims 1, 5 and 8 are method claims corresponding, respectively, to Claims 21, 22 and 23.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of the invention, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of a service request apparatus i) receiving a second address for accessing a service providing apparatus, which is designated by a agent apparatus based on first information of the device information, wherein the device information is also added to the second address, ii) sending the device information added to the second address to the service providing apparatus by accessing the received second address, wherein an address in a web browser

of the service request apparatus is automatically changed to the second address, iii) receiving page information from the service providing apparatus and displaying the received page information on a display, wherein the service providing apparatus generates the page information according to second information of the device information and transmits the generated page information to the service request apparatus.

Bernklau discloses that after a web server 45 of a printer 14 accesses a support server 12 to transmit diagnostic information of the printer 14 to the support server 12, a computer 28 of the printer 14 accesses the support server 12 to receive a web page including a link suitable for the diagnostic information from the support server 12, and a user selects the link. In Bernklau, however, it is merely disclosed that the web server 45 or the computer 28 accesses the support server 12, and there is no mention of changing an access destination to a device other than the support server 12. Furthermore, in Bernklau, it is merely disclosed that the computer 28 displays the page to be selected by the user and the user manually selects the link of interactive diagnostic, and there is no mention of automatically changing the access destination as claimed invention. Accordingly, Claims 1, 5, 8 and 21 to 23, as well as the claims dependent therefrom, are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our California office by telephone at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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